



DANTES Subject Standardized Tests

# Fact Sheet

## A HISTORY OF THE VIETNAM WAR

### TEST INFORMATION

Approximate  
Percent

This test was developed to enable schools to award credit to students for knowledge equivalent to that which is learned by students taking the course. The school may choose to award college credit to the student based on the achievement of a passing score. The passing score for each examination is determined by the school based on recommendations from the American Council on Education (ACE). This minimum credit-awarding score is equal to the mean score of students in the norming sample who received a grade of C in the course. Some schools set their own standards for awarding credit and may require a higher score than the ACE recommendation. Students should obtain this information from the institution where they expect to receive credit.

### CONTENT

The following topics, which are commonly taught in courses on this subject, are covered by this examination.

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <p>I. The Roots of a War</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Vietnam's traditional enemies</li> <li>B. A tradition of resistance</li> <li>C. Ho Chi Minh and the Communists</li> <li>D. Anti-colonialism</li> <li>E. Nationalism</li> <li>F. Rice culture and collective society</li> </ul> | <p>Approximate<br/>Percent</p> <p><b>5%</b></p> | <p>D. Communist victory in China</p> <p>E. French military strategies</p> <p>F. The Geneva Conference</p> <p>G. Differing French/American perspectives on Vietnam</p>  |
| <p>II. The First Vietnam War (1946-1954)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Vietnam independence</li> <li>B. Origins of containment</li> <li>C. U.S. geopolitical goals and involvement in Asia</li> </ul>   | <p><b>7%</b></p>                                | <p>III. America's Mandarin (1954-1963)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. America's search for stability, Western-style</li> <li>B. Diem's inadequacies as a political leader</li> <li>C. JFK's approach to counter-insurgency and strategic hamlets</li> <li>D. Nation-building</li> <li>E. U.S. military and economic aid (late 1950's)</li> <li>F. The National Liberation Front</li> <li>G. Internal opposition (the Buddhist crisis)</li> <li>H. Diem's overthrow</li> </ul> |
|   |   | <p>IV. LBJ Goes to War (1964-1965)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Johnson and the revolving-door coups in Vietnam</li> <li>B. The worsening military situation (post-coup)</li> <li>C. The Tonkin Gulf affair</li> <li>D. The guns-and-butter election: Campaign '64</li> <li>E. Reprisal raids on the North (Flaming Dart)</li> <li>F. Introduction of American combat troops (March 1965)</li> </ul>  |



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	<u>Approximate Percent</u>		<u>Approximate Percent</u>
V. America Takes Charge (1965-1967)	<b>11%</b>	IX. Cambodia and Laos	<b>7%</b>
A. The war of attrition		A. Vietnam decides the fate of Cambodia and Laos	
B. Measures of success (Cedar Falls)		B. Kennedy's Laos solution	
C. Rolling Thunder		C. Breakdown of coalition in Laos	
D. Impact on Vietnam society		D. Cambodia's attempt to stay out of the war	
E. Selling the war at home		E. Sihanouk's regime and overthrow	
F. U.S. soldiers' changing views		F. The secret bombing of Cambodia and Laos	
VI. America's Enemy (1954-1967)	<b>3%</b>	G. U.S. incursions and results for Cambodia	
A. Prisons as schools for revolutionaries		H. The Khmer Rouge and the fall of Phnom Penh	
B. The role of Ho Chi Minh		X. Peace is at Hand (1968-1973)	<b>7%</b>
C. Politics takes precedence over military action		A. The Nixon-Kissinger grand strategy	
D. The People's War: the guerilla tradition		B. Nixon's promise (1968)	
E. The quality of endurance		C. Kissinger's promise (1972) and Thieu's resistance	
F. The decision for the Tet offensive		D. Secret negotiations (1969-1971)	
VII. Tet, 1968	<b>7%</b>	E. Soviet détente and U.S. dialogue with China	
A. Reasons for Tet: ending the stalemate		F. Bombing and bombing halts	
B. America deceived by Communist strategy (Phase I)		G. The Vietnam Agreements	
C. General offensive (Phase II)		H. Returning P.O.W.'s	
D. Impact I: military setback; Communist political victory		XI. Homefront USA	<b>10%</b>
E. Impact II: the debate over means and ends in the U.S.		A. Peace activists, moratoria, draft resistance	
F. LBJ resigns		B. Credibility gap	
G. Rising dissidence in the U.S.		C. Miami and the Siege of Chicago	
H. Bombing halt and beginning of peace talks		D. Civil rights movement, counterculture, anti-war movement	
VIII. Vietnamizing the War (1968-1973)	<b>7%</b>	E. Kent State	
A. Justifications for Vietnamization (troop withdrawal)		F. Veterans join the peace movement (Dewey Canyon III)	
B. The Phoenix program and Chieu Hoi		G. The Pentagon Papers and My Lai	
C. Lowered morale of the U.S. troops		H. Nixon confronts the anti-war movement	
D. The 1971 Vietnam elections			
E. The 1972 spring offensive and the Battle for Quang Tri			

	<u>Approximate Percent</u>
XII. The End of the Tunnel (1973-1975)	<b>10%</b>
A. The post-war war	
B. A decent interval	
C. Internal political opposition to Thieu	
D. North Vietnam's strategy	
E. Our weak ally	
F. Nixon's secret promises	
G. Peace with honor	
H. The fall of Saigon	
XIII. Legacies and Lessons	<b>8%</b>
A. Vietnam and its effect on U.S. foreign policy	
B. Congress vs. the President	
C. Vietnam and U.S. politics	
D. The experience of returning vets: post-traumatic stress syndrome, Agent Orange, no victory parades	
E. Vietnam and U.S. society	
F. Economic consequences of Vietnam	
G. Vietnam and U.S.-Soviet relations (1973-1980)	
H. The impact of Vietnam on the U.S. military	
I. Indochina refugees (Boat People)	

Questions on the test require candidates to demonstrate the following abilities. Some questions may require more than one of the abilities.

- Knowledge of basic facts and terms (about 40-50% of the examination)
- Understanding of concepts and principles (about 30-40% of the examination)
- Ability to apply knowledge to specific cases or issues (about 10-15% of the examination)

## SAMPLE QUESTIONS

1. The traditional enemy that dominated Vietnam for more than a thousand years was
  - (A) Japan
  - (B) China
  - (C) Russia
  - (D) France
2. The 1973 cease-fire in Vietnam was broken by which of the following?
  - I. Beijing
  - II. Hanoi
  - III. Saigon
  - (A) II only
  - (B) III only
  - (C) I and II only
  - (D) II and III only
3. More than any other single factor, what enabled President Diem to survive the first few critical years after 1954?
  - (A) United States aid
  - (B) President Diem's forceful leadership
  - (C) The will of the Vietnamese people to resist Communist forces
  - (D) The support of the Roman Catholic church
4. In reaction to foreign invasions, the Vietnamese developed
  - (A) a highly structured society that was very religious
  - (B) an ability to compromise and to negotiate
  - (C) a warrior tradition and a strong sense of national identity
  - (D) a fatalistic philosophy

5. The United States government went to great lengths to prove that the Second Vietnam War was the result of “aggression from the North.” However, critics of American policy in Vietnam argued that the
- (A) insurgency was really masterminded by the Soviets and directed by the Kremlin
  - (B) revolution sprang from indigenous roots largely in response to President Diem’s oppressiveness
  - (C) violence was a result of religious differences between Roman Catholics and Buddhists
  - (D) war was actually a reaction to former French policies and the continuation of French puppet leaders in North Vietnam
6. General Giap’s long-term strategy at the time of the Tet offensive was to continue to bleed the Americans until they
- (A) stopped the bombing of North Vietnam
  - (B) agreed to a settlement that satisfied Hanoi
  - (C) agreed to reconvene the Geneva Conference
  - (D) withdrew their military forces to coastal enclaves
7. What were the two major results of the introduction of hundreds of thousands of American troops on Vietnamese society?
- I. Widespread corruption
  - II. Dislocation of the Vietnamese economy
  - III. Unemployment of Vietnamese nationals
  - IV. A drop in rice production
- (A) I and II
  - (B) I and III
  - (C) II and IV
  - (D) III and IV
8. Martin Luther King, Jr. spoke out against the Vietnam war in 1967 on the grounds that
- (A) the war was immoral
  - (B) there were no middle-class Americans being drafted
  - (C) the war was unwinnable
  - (D) the United States economy could not compete with the Soviet economy
9. Congressional leaders were reluctant to challenge presidential actions in Vietnam because they
- (A) deferred to the executive branch’s power to declare war
  - (B) had agreed in 1964 to a declaration of war
  - (C) had no constitutional authority to do so
  - (D) were reluctant to withdraw support from United States troops in the field
10. For which of the following reasons did the Vietnam veterans differ from the veterans of previous wars?
- (A) They received no veteran’s educational benefits.
  - (B) They frequently encountered public hostility and indifference.
  - (C) They were often physically disabled.
  - (D) They fought in the jungles of Asia.

## STUDYING FOR THE EXAMINATION

The following is a list of reference publications that were being used as textbooks in college courses of the same or similar title at the time the test was developed. Appropriate textbooks for study are not limited to those listed below. If you wish to obtain study resources to prepare for the examination, you may reference either the current edition of the following titles **or** textbooks currently used at a local college or university for the same class title. It is recommended that you reference **more than one textbook** on the topics outlined in this fact sheet. You should **begin by checking textbook content against the content outline** included on the front page of this Fact Sheet/Study Guide **before** selecting textbooks that cover the test content from which to study. Textbooks may be found at the campus bookstore of a local college or university offering a course on the subject.

Sources for study material suggested but not limited to the following:

Cohen, Steven. *VIETNAM: Anthology and Guide to a Television History*. New York: McGraw-Hill, current edition.

Herring, George C. *America’s Longest War: The U.S. and Vietnam 1950-1975*. New York: Knopf, current edition.

Karnow, Stanley. *VIETNAM: A HISTORY*. New York: Penguin USA, current edition.

de Benetetti, Charles. *An American Ordeal: The Antiwar Movement of the Vietnam Era*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, current edition.

Berman, Larry. *Planning a Tragedy*. New York: W.W. Norton & Co., current edition .

Gelb, Leslie, and Richard Betts. *The Irony of Vietnam: The System Worked*. Washington, DC: Brookings, current edition.

Greene, Graham. *The Quiet American*. New York: Penguin, current edition.

Herr, Michael. *Dispatches*. New York: Avon, current edition.

Hellman, John. *American Myth and the Legacy of Vietnam*. New York: Columbia University Press, current edition.

Issacs, Arnold. *Without Honor: Defeat in Vietnam and Cambodia*. New York: Vintage Books, current edition.

Kimball, Jeffrey P. *To Reason Why: The Debate About Causes of U.S. Involvement in the Vietnam War*. New York: McGraw-Hill, current edition.

Krepinevich, Andrew. *The Army and Vietnam*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, current edition.

Lederer, William J., and Eugene Burdick. *The Ugly American*. Greenwood, CT: Fawcett, current edition.

Moss, George Donelson. *Vietnam: An American Ordeal*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, current edition.

Pratt, John Clark. *Vietnam Voices: Perspectives on the War Years, 1941-1982*. New York: Viking-Penguin Books, current edition.

Race, Jeffrey. *War Comes to Long An*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, current edition.

Schulzinger, Robert, ed. *Peace and Change*. Vol.

9, #2 and 3. Sonoma, CA: California State College, current edition.

Turley, William S. *The Second Indochina War*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1986; Scarborough, ONT: New American Library, Mentor Books, current edition.

Williams, William Appleman, Thomas McCormick, Lloyd Gardner, and Walter LaFeber. *America in Vietnam: A Documentary History*. New York: W. W. Norton, current edition.

Current textbook used by a local college or university for a course on the subject.

## CREDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

The Center For Adult Learning and Educational Credentials of the American Council on Education (ACE) has reviewed and evaluated the DAN TES examination development process. The American Council on Education has made the following recommendations:

Area or Course	
Equivalent:	A History of the Vietnam War
Level:	Lower-level baccalaureate
Amount of Credit:	Three (3) semester hours
Source:	ACE Commission on Educational Credit and Credentials

## INFORMATION

Colleges and universities that would like to review copies of tests, have additional information about the national norming, or assistance in local norming or score validation studies should write to: DAN TES Program, Mail Stop 11-P, The Chauncey Group International, 664 Rosedale Road, Princeton, New Jersey 08540.

It is advisable that schools develop a consistent policy about awarding credit based on scores from this test and that the policy be reviewed periodically. The Chauncey Group will be happy to help schools in this effort.

Correct responses to sample questions: 1,B; 2,D; 3,A; 4,C; 5,B; 6,B; 7,A; 8,A; 9,D; 10,B.